

ble on demand in the legal coin of the realm, and that cash payments ought to be resumed at the end of two years. The report was ably supported by Mr. Henry Thornton, but was assailed by Mr. Rose, Mr. Vansittart, and others. Mr. Vansittart maintained that ' * a standard in the sense used by these gentlemen, namely, a fixed and invariable weight of the precious metals as a measure of value, never existed in this country." His idea was that the pound sterling was a sort of intangible thing, and that the paper pound was not to be considered as depreciated so long as it formed the current medium of exchange, and was accepted in the discharge of obligations. The effort was made by the defenders of paper money to deny any difference between gold prices and paper prices, but it was disclosed in the course of the debate that the government themselves were making a distinction by paying guineas to the soldiers in Guernsey at the value of 23 shillings, although their legal value was only 21 shillings.

The country was not ready to return to a specie basis, and Mr. Horner's first resolution was defeated by a vote of 75 in the affirmative to 151 in the negative, and his final resolution by a vote of 45 to 180. Mr. Vansittart followed up his victory by a series of resolutions, to the effect " That the promissory notes of the Bank of England have hitherto been, and are at this time held to be, equivalent to the legal coin of the realm," and that the price of bullion and the state of the foreign exchanges were in no way due to excessive issues of bank paper. Notwithstanding the protests of the better informed members of the House, an amendment by Mr. Canning was rejected, 42 to 82, and Mr. Vansittart's & astounding resolutions were carried.

The opponents of the Bullion Report laid stress upon the fact that gold was not sold openly at a premium. The reason was the belief that it was a penal offence to part with a bank-note for less than its face value in bullion, and at the very moment of the debate on Mr. Horner's report three men were lying in prison for selling guineas for more than, twenty-one shillings under an old statute of Edward VI.